

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOOD SAFETY AND INSPECTION SERVICE
WASHINGTON, DC

FSIS DIRECTIVE

6500.1

7/2/04

EMERGENCY INCIDENT RESPONSE

I. PURPOSE

This directive defines an “emergency incident” and provides instructions to Agency personnel on how to report an emergency incident involving FSIS-regulated product. It also outlines the procedures followed by the Emergency Management Committee (EMC) in managing an emergency incident. The EMC coordinates the use of resources from the various Agency program offices.

II. [RESERVED]

III. [RESERVED]

IV. REFERENCES

9 CFR Part 300 to end.

V. ABBREVIATIONS

AA	Assistant Administrator
COOP	Continuity of Operations Plans
EMC	Emergency Management Committee
DM	District Manager
IM	Incident Manager
OFSEP	Office of Food Security and Emergency Preparedness
RM	Regional Manager
CID	Compliance Investigation Division

DISTRIBUTION: Inspection Offices; T/A Inspectors;
Plant Mgt; T/A Plant Mgt; TRA; ABB; PRD; Import
Offices

OPI: OPED

VI. BACKGROUND

A. An emergency incident consists of a grave or potentially grave threat to public health involving FSIS-regulated product. Examples of an emergency incident are potentially widespread, life-threatening human illnesses caused by FSIS-regulated product, deliberate contamination of FSIS-regulated product, threat condition Orange or Red with a specific threat to the food and agricultural sector, and widespread animal health disease with severe economic consequences associated with FSIS-regulated product.

NOTE: In the event the incidence of animal disease does not result in product adulteration, the purpose of the EMC meeting would be to determine how to work with the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) to control the spread of the disease and how to best supply the public with information about the safety of the product.

B. Routine incidents are not considered emergencies and do not warrant activating the EMC (see Section VII). Routine incidents include most product recalls, consumer complaints, and reports of human illnesses caused by FSIS-regulated product.

VII. Emergency Management Committee

A. The FSIS EMC is a standing committee that may be activated at anytime on any day of the year to address and manage the Agency's response to an emergency incident.

B. The EMC is comprised of senior management personnel (the Assistant Administrator (AA) or designee) from each of the eight FSIS program Offices. Each program office has a primary and backup representative to the EMC who have the authority to commit, as necessary, the resources of their respective program Office.

C. The representative from the FSIS Office of Food Security and Emergency Preparedness (OFSEP) serves as the incident manager (IM). The IM coordinates the work of the EMC in response to a particular emergency incident.

D. OFSEP maintains an up-dated roster of on-call EMC members, including home, work, and cell phone numbers as well as email and home addresses. OFSEP develops emergency incident reports and monitors related intelligence. OFSEP maintains the FSIS Situation Room and Agency preparedness plans in conjunction with the Department's Continuity of Operations(COOP). In conjunction with the Department's Homeland Security Office, OFSEP is FSIS' emergency incident liaison with other Federal agencies.

VIII. AGENCY PERSONNEL RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Agency personnel are to rapidly report any emergency incident through normal supervisory channels. Supervisors are to summarize the incident information and to submit an incident report to the appropriate District Manager (DM), Compliance Investigation Division (CID) Regional Manager (RM), Laboratory Director, or Division Director, as appropriate.

B. The incident report is to include:

1. the name of the person who reported the incident,
2. date of the incident,
3. location of the incident,
4. the type of threat, hazard, or disease,
5. the type of product involved,
6. number of reported illnesses and deaths (if applicable),
7. product codes and weight (if available), and
8. other known Federal, state, and local responders to the incident

C. The DM, RM, Laboratory Director, or Division Director will relay the incident report to the appropriate program Office's EMC representative within one hour of receipt.

IX. CONVENING THE EMC

A. An AA EMC representative, in consultation with the OFSEP EMC representative, will review the incident report and decide if the incident qualifies as an emergency incident.

B. If in the judgment of the AA EMC representative the incident does not qualify as an emergency incident, then the OFSEP EMC representative will not activate the FSIS EMC. However, the OFSEP EMC representative will post the incident report on the FSIS Intranet EMC page under "Background Incidents."

C. If the AA EMC representative, in consultation with the OFSEP EMC representative, decides that the reported incident qualifies as an emergency incident, then the OFSEP EMC representative will convene the EMC that same day. The OFSEP

EMC representative will post the incident report on the FSIS Intranet EMC page and send an email message and call the EMC members on-call.

D. The AA EMC representative will inform the supervisor who filed the incident report if the EMC is being convened or not.

E. OFSEP will contact the on-call EMC members for each program Office by telephone and email. Each on-call EMC member is instructed to call a teleconference bridge number or report to a meeting location at a specified time.

X. THE WORK OF THE EMC

A. The EMC discusses and evaluates the information provided on the emergency incident and determines what further information is needed to complete the assessment of the emergency incident. The EMC also develops an initial plan of action to protect the public, including how FSIS will work with other agencies to monitor epidemiology and laboratory findings, industry and public input, law enforcement and intelligence information.

B. The EMC coordinates the development of responses to questions about the emergency incident, including responses to standard questions about illness prevention, hazard detection, incident containment, and remediation. The EMC also recommends Agency actions to detect and prevent the hazard that caused the emergency incident.

C. The IM coordinates the work of the EMC and the emergency responses across program Offices and provides incident progress to the Senior Management Council (e.g., Office of the Administrator and AAs). All Program Offices are to routinely provide updates to assist the IM in tracking the incident response, reporting progress, and maintaining relevant documents and a chronology of events.

D. During severe emergency incidents or when Headquarters operations are disrupted, the EMC and support staff may need to relocate to an Emergency Relocation Facility (ERF) specified under the Department's COOP.

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